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THE UNIVERSITY AND THE CORPORATION

Bernard Rosenberg

APR 14 1959

## LIBERATION AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

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## In This Issue:

BERNARD ROSENBERG is on the editorial board of Dissent. He is the author of The Values of Veblen (Public Affairs Press), and co-editor (with David M. White) of Mass Culture, an anthology published by the Free Press. Max Lerner has said: "Having worked with Rosenberg, I can testify both joyfully and ruefully that his is one of the most mordant and brilliant minds among the younger social scientists and that he delights in carving into little pieces the sacred cows of the academic world." On Page Two of last month's LIBERATION. Mr. Rosenberg was inadvertently confused with Mr. Harold Rosenberg, another very able writer, who also contributes to Dissent.

ALLEN GINSBERG is the most famous of the young poets who are identified with the "San Francisco movement" as representatives of the Beat Generation. He is currently living in New York.

COLIN WARD is an editor of Freedom, the anarchist weekly founded by Kropotkin (27 Red Lion St., London, W. C. 1, England). His column "People and Ideas" appears regularly in that publi-

DAVID WIECK is a frequent contributor to LIBERATION.

ALLAN R. BRICK teaches English at Dartmouth.

A volume of poems and translations by GUY DANIELS will be published this month by the Inferno Press.

THE COVER is by Vera Williams.

REPRINTS of A. J. Muste's article "Getting Rid of War," which appeared in last month's LIBERATION, are now available in 12-page pamphlet form, at ten cents a copy. Bulk orders may be obtained at reduced rates.

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GIEN GARD

# editorials.

#### BERLIN

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The only proposal which makes sense in the present German crisis is a Germany united by free elections and neutral as between the two power blocs. Two closely interrelated principles are involved here: (1) the German people have a right to determine their own form of government and (2) in the present world situation it is not safe for either power bloc to profit from this self-determination.

At present neither side appears willing to accept this solution because it would set in motion a tendency which would threaten the American position in Western Europe and the Russian position in Eastern Europe. A neutral Germany would be a center of infection for neutrality, which might well lead to an end of the cold war and the dreams of hegemony over Europe of both Russia and the United States. As of now neither side wants to stop the Cold War when the price is such an abandonment of dynamic expansionism.

Berlin is a crucial focal point because here is the place where a genuine solution would inevitably mean a decline in the world positions of both the United States and the Soviet Union. The two great powers share a common interest in not allowing any real neutrality to develop, on the assumption that a great power is not a great power if it is not working to fill every available power vacuum. The establishment of real German neutrality would mean a slowing down of the arms race and probably ultimately the abandon-ment of the conception of a world carved up between the two great

World rulers are playing a satanic game by continuing the old delusions of power politics into the atomic age. The missile-rattling and ultimatums of Khrushchev are antihuman and should not be answered by similar inflammatory talk. No ideological or national aspirations are worth a threat to the lives of millions of people and perhaps to civilization itself.

We may not have many more chances to make a turn toward peace. Berlin may be the fork in the road where either the Cold War and big-power expansionism will have to be abandoned, or forces may be set in motion which will make war all but inevitable.

R. F.

#### A. F. HEAD SEES ATOM WAR ALL OVER IN '2 OR 3' DAYS

GEN. WHITE CONFIDENT OF U. S. MIGHT

Bars a Retreat in Berlin Crisis

Washington, Mar. 15—This country must back to the hilt President Eisenhower's don't-give-an-inch policy on Berlin, even if it leads to general war, in the opinion of Gen. Thomas D. White, Air Force member of the Joint Chief of Staff....

Gen. White's views were given behind closed doors to the Senate Preparedness subcommittee... A heavily censored version was made public...

New York Herald Tribune

The most frightening aspect of this news item is not that General White could speak so casually of what might be the extermination of the human race. We have come to expect such stupidity in generals. What chills us is that such statements reflect official policy and can be made day after day without provoking storms of protests. Are we going to let the politicians, the generals, and the scientists wipe out the entire human population without making a serious effort to stop them? Is the human race so cowed, so brainwashed and so gutless that it has lost the effective will to live?

The elementary response of those who care a fig for human survival must be complete opposition to the insanity of the government. We should refuse to help in any way with the manufacture of the weapons of destruction. We should refuse to serve in the armed forces. We should refuse to pay income taxes, since 64% of the taxes are used to finance war preparations. We should appeal to our fellows to join us in a campaign of complete noncooperation with the war machine. We should conduct nonviolent demonstrations at missile bases, bomb plants, and wherever the instruments of human suicide are being made. (A directaction project is being planned to

take place at the Omaha I. C. B. M. base in June.) We should start thinking, talking, and acting in terms of a general strike to insist that the economy be converted to constructive purposes.

How hollow the words sound! How far we are from being able to put them into practice on a large scale! And yet to talk in any other terms is to mislead the American people and to acquiesce in the probable death of hundreds of millions.

The stakes are absolute these days, and we have no choice but to make a clean break with the prevailing madness, even if it means laying our jobs, our reputations, and our physical freedom on the line. If we hold back for fear of alienating the liberals and the unaroused, we will be merely helping preserve the illusion that the crisis is partial and can be met by partial measures.

can be met by partial measures.

Every individual human dies, so it may be that the human race as a whole is destined to die also. But it is hard to believe that we are willing to let the politicians atomize the species without at least giving them a run for their money.

Politicians, like the rest of us, are caught in a trap that is only partially of their own making. Our total non-cooperation with the military program of violent death should be accompanied by appeals to its present dupes to join us in a crash program to develop nonviolent substitutes that will both preserve and enrich human life.

#### POLITICS OF TODAY & THE FUTURE

When the revolt of sections of the French Army in Algeria against the government of the Fourth Republic last year led to the return of General DeGaulle to power, LIBERATION observed that no basic issues before the French people had been settled. A new political facade had been erected. A new piece of political machinery had been set up which might in the future be used by interests wanting a dictatorship and which certainly did not represent an advance for parliamentary democracy.

This judgment has been confirmed by subsequent events, including the recent election for nearly half a million mayors and councilors in thirty-

eight thousand French municipalities. De Gaulle received a tremendous number of votes last autumn for his new constitution and his mixed parliamentary and anti-parliamentary regime. But the war in Algeria continues to bleed France and the response to De Gaulle's domestic "austerity" measures was a drastic drop from last year in the votes cast for Gaullist candidates in the recent elections. In 13 major cities the Gaullist vote dropped by 21.5 per cent. On the other hand, the Communists, who were supposed to be cut down to size, if not wholly eliminated, under the new regime, increased their vote in these cities by 19.5 per cent.

Figures in a run-off election which had to take place in other districts differ somewhat, but those given suffice to illustrate a condition and a trend. In the first place, in the so-called "Free World" one finds in nearly all cases confusion because of a failure on the part of parliamentary regimes to resolve the problems which their peoples face or-at another stage-a tendency to put generals in charge of the State and to develop a pattern under which there is actually only one party, though the illusion of a two-party or multi-party system is retained. This may be described as a more or less effectively disguised dictatorship, under which the individual has less and less ability to bring any effective influence to bear on those who supposedly represent him and are his Karl Barth, the controversial Swiss theologian, recently called this tendency "creeping totalitarianism."

In the meantime, though Communist regimes and parties are not without their own troubles, in the main, as is illustrated in the French elections, they cannot be wiped out, and in most cases they move ominously forward. The statement of reliable sources that there are three hundred thousand Communist adherents in Franco Spain today is another case in point. To multitudes in the underdeveloped countries and many in the "Free World", Communism continues to be the one clear alternative to and intransigent enemy of the status quo.

The various Socialist and Labor parties do not, certainly as now constituted, furnish a viable alternative. They do not have a joint international program and a cohesive international force to confront Communism on the one hand and neo-capitalism and the Western war machines on the other. They certainly need to re-examine such questions as what democratic socialism concretely means today and why they find themselves so closely linked for the most part to the national state, so equivocal in their attitude toward nuclear war, so unable to define a goal which surpasses the Welfare State, and to move society toward that better goal. The calling of a congress of the non-Communist left in Europe by Aneurin Bevan, Mendès-France and Pietro Nenni indicates that in some circles there is awareness of such problems.

However, all such phenomena may, we suggest, mean that "the politics of the future" which LIBERATION in its opening manifesto resolved to seek, may differ much more fundamentally from politics as people are accustoned to think of it than is commonly supposed. For an illuminating discussion of this possibility we commend the article "Beyond the Labor Party" by Colin Ward in this issue.

A. J. M.

#### INSANITY, INCORPORATED

The Rand Corporation, whose research usually is underwritten by the military, dug into its own pockets to investigate the problem of defense against nuclear attack. In a "plausible attack" on fifty of our largest cities, say the Rand scientists, we might have ninety million deaths. Another ninety million Americans would survive. If the Soviet target was one hundred and fifty American cities, the death rate would be a hundred and sixty million, with twenty million survivors.

One shouldn't be dismayed or discouraged by such a prospect, states the Rand pamphlet. At a cost of some two hundred billion dollars for supplying each of us with a \$5 dosimeter (to detect radiation) and for building underground shelters, this toll can be cut to as little as twenty-five million and, with luck, to as little as five million.

The Rand scientists, who seem to be a sort of brain trust for the Defense Department, have tried to think of everything. After we buried our dead (special instructions have been issued to undertakers on the disposal of radioactive corpses), we'd go about rebuilding our economy. One year after the bomb raid, we'd be back to

16 per cent of our gross national product, and in the eleventh year we'd reach 89 per cent.

These meticulous calculations have nevertheless failed to cover several considerations. The envisioned non-military defense is based on our receiving notice from a half hour to a few hours in advance of the bombs. But how much notice would we get if suitcase bombs were deposited in our cities and detonated by remote control? And why should we assume that the first raid would be the last? What is the guarantee that the Russians (or the Americans) cannot attack five nights in a row? How many then would be dead?

This piece of Rand research shows how far into the military nightmare we have already traveled. What in heaven's name would we be defending if twenty-five million or fifty million or one hundred and twenty-five million of our people were to be slaughtered?

LIBERATION abhors totalitarianism, Khrushchev Communism included. But in spite of all the wild talk about "better no world than a Communist world," we frankly wonder whether in a showdown the American people would tolerate such a slaughter of their neighbors and of an equal number of Russians in retaliation and risk the possible obliteration of mankind. There are, moreover, other ways of undermining tyranny, provided there are human beings left alive to employ them.

We surmise that in a showdown the Russian people similarly might not tolerate wholesale wanton slaughter of Americans and of themselves and risk the possible obliteration of the race, rather than live under capital-

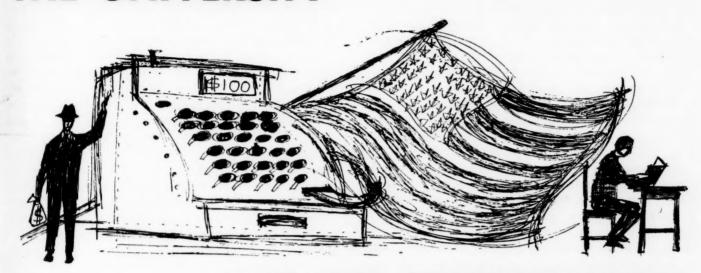
The people of the Middle Ages experienced frightful decimation in bubonic-plague epidemics, but these catastrophes were beyond man's control. Today civilized researchers with electronic calculating machines are stolidly estimating what you do when as a matter of policy you have seen seveneighths of your countrymen slaughtered and have replied by wreaking a similar atrocity on another people.

Is this what people want? We doubt it. If it is, it would mean that sanity and the standards of civilized life had been scuttled and the battle for any of the professed goals of East or West already irrevocably lost.

J. 1

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# THE UNIVERSITY



# AND THE CORPORATION

**Bernard Rosenberg** 

There was once an illiterate sailor who turned to begging odd jobs in order to eat after he had jumped ship in a strange port. His luck wasn't very good and he went without eating for several days. Then he got an offer of a job from a middle-aged matron: "Well, we don't have any wood to chop or ashes to carry out. You see this is a whorehouse. But we have been so busy lately that I haven't had time to catch up on my book-keeping. If you'll come in and work on my books for an hour or so I'll fix you a good meal."

The sailor had to refuse the offer, because of his lack of education, but was given a sack of apples anyway by the kind-hearted madam. Sitting down at the nearest street corner, he ate half of the apples and then fell asleep. Waking up a few hours later he found that his apples were gone but there was money in his sack instead. Seizing the opportunity, he took the money and bought some more apples and quickly sold them. In a week's time he made enough money to have a little pushcart for his apples. In a year's time he had a truck. In five years' time he owned several warehouses, a fleet of trucks, and was known as the Apple King of the area.

His tax consultant worked over his books one day, complimented the former sailor on his business acumen, and asked whether or not he had gone to the Harvard Business School. The modest self-made man replied, "Hell, no. Why if I'd gone to school I wouldn't be where I am today. I'd be a bookkeeper in a whorehouse!"

LAST YEAR, largely to preserve our sanity, we took our family from The Valley of Opportunity in upstate New York, where we had been teaching, and where we all suffered. It had become so socially and physically oppressive to us that it was no longer tolerable. The skies were almost always black, and nearly every day brought its "precipitation". But weather conditions had less to do with our move than the cultural climate.

Our colleagues at a foundling liberal-arts college shared a sense of unreality with us; we were all there and yet we were not there. Teaching was too often a thankless chore (one searched with little success for a saving remnant in the quiescent student body), but it sapped our spirit much less than the extra-academic distraction with which we were surrounded. The committee system, teamwork, and collective decision-making (or a vast pretense thereof) have triumphed in Moscow and Washington. There is no reason why Siwash should be governed by any other principle.

While the President, with an assist from his Dean, actually made policy—and with a benign arbitrariness characteristic of his kind—he never forgot to foster the illusion that everyone was participating in a democratic process. Votes were taken, and if the results were unsatisfactory they were taken again until harmony with the President was finally achieved. All this created the need for regular faculty meetings, divi-

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sional meetings, departmental meetings, committee meetings, and subcommittee meetings. The bureaucratic monster spawns with just as much fecundity and ferocity in a small institution as it does in society at large. However, the fact that bureaucracy grows does not always mean that there must be more bureaucrats. It is much simpler to bureaucratize the faculty.

Professors not only meet interminably and thereby dissipate their energies in puerile squabblings; they must also guide, advise, orient and counsel students who are regarded (and how often with reason!) as totally helpless. This exploitation of the scholar's time is a deliberate encroachment, as insidious in its way as ecclesiastical or business control of the higher learning. At one point the faculty staged a revolt against counselling and actually got a motion on the floor of the sovereign faculty body. The rebellion was quickly put down when the Dean spoke against the motion and ended with the telling question, "Do you want to leave the counselling of our students to graduates of teachers' colleges?"

#### The Higher Depravity

Does anyone benefit from it? Surely not the student. What does it matter that the student may be given curricular advice as between two harmless courses when he is otherwise completely hemmed in by "requirements"? Orientation, once reserved for freshmen, may now take four years and disorientation is still common at the end. Nor are any of his new duties as onerous to the conscientious academic man as the psychological counselling which has also too often been thrust upon him. Shall the co-ed with Lesbian tendencies be told to "fulfill" herself as she was in one case I know. If not, what is the physicist, the economist, even the sociologist or animal psychologist to counsel? A psychiatrist? But there isn't a competent practitioner for miles around. Hire one? But nobody wants to. And what is the role of the professor-bureaucrat-administrator if not to keep the academician from scholarly pursuits? Thorstein Veblen understood the situation very well forty years ago when he wanted to call his book about the higher learning in America A Study in Total Depravity.

The great artist and the really gifted social scientist—between them there are only trifling differences on this score—have more than the average amount of detachment. They are able to view their fellows with a kind of dual vision, seeing them in part at least as material for fiction or as data for a social study. The gifted artist and social scientist have this detachment; the less-than-gifted need to work harder to attain it. Involvement with the neuroses of students, caucuses to defeat or sustain committee reports, and meetings and meetings and meetings discourage rather than foster the pursuit of scholarly detachment.

There is a fearful trend in the American college, which reached a kind of apogee for us during our isolation upstate, but which can be seen in less developed forms elsewhere. Its name is general education. Its instrument is the survey course.

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In our college twenty-one men—who met every week to enlarge their opportunities for back-biting and infighting and who were penalized if they failed to appear—joined with each other to convey the burden of social science to the freshman class. The term "social science" was liberally interpreted. Among the fields represented were accountancy (whose spokesman was our group leader), geology and geography (for rocks and pressure areas certainly affect the human condition) and the conventional historians, economists, anthropologists, jurists and sociologists.

There was a colossal text for this colossal course. the several editors of which had their own idiosyncratic preferences, including orthodox psychoanalysis, liberal theology, Keynsian and Chamberlinian economics. As things worked out, the instructor found himself stocking impressionable minds with tags (that they later obnoxiously displayed) for ideas which could never be treated in depth, since there were always more ideas at hand that had to be given the same breathless treatment. One day Freud. Next day Marx. Day after St. Thomas. The Id. The Ego. Dialectical Materialism. Divine Providence. Transcendentalism. All transmitted by people who knew only a fragment of what they were talking about to others who would probably not even learn that fragment. The violence done to the young, impressionable minds in such a course is beyond measure. It is no consolation that there were only a few impressionable minds among the hundreds of freshmen taking the course.

Low pay, non-academic duties, interminable conflicts just to continue teaching the courses of your interest, and the experience of general education—not to go into the whole miserable story of the other faculty wives' societal pressure on our wives—all added up to our leaving the non-ivied walls of Academe for the business world. Why remain a two-bit whore when you can be a Jelke girl? The sociologist who bitterly condemns mass communication for creating a faceless society can find well-paid repose on Madison Avenue doing motivational research. The economist, even if of the Manchester school and a vigorous opponent of monopoly, can find employment with a large corporation under indictment for violation of the anti-trust laws. Or so was our experience.

The transition from one chamber to another produced no great rupture in our lives. It has proved just as effortless for the many men of stature who do it every day. Between the homogenized corporate team and the homogenized general-education team there is little to choose—except money. Whoring is whoring whether for two bits or a hundred dollars. For the intellectual America is a many chambered whorehouse. The whorehouse is as much a symbol of our time as the monastery was of the Middle Ages. We're all bookkeepers in the whorehouse.

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The transition to the world of Mammon was not difficult and—as expected—produced little improvement. The sense of unreality persisted and grew. Some of the shapes had changed but the same illusions persisted. The illusion of democracy takes on different forms in business. In Academe the pre-decided decision had to be democratically voted on. In the Corporation the decision has to be delayed until all angles have been studied, all committees have made their recommendations; in the end some far removed vice-president makes the decision, or the decision becomes obsolete because of changes in the market-place. Frantic activity to prepare a report for a deadline, and then the executive decides he's too busy to read it or have it presented to him.

The academicians and semi-academicians on the operations research or market-research team may take months of intensive study to find out why the consumer isn't buying, or what the production-scheduling system should be. The studies are sometimes even good, and if similar time and money had been devoted to an academic study the reputations of the researchers would have been made. To the businessman the study is a piece of goods. The part that reinforces his prejudices will be adopted enthusiastically as good research, the part that disagrees with his views will be ignored or sent back for "further study". The professor must counsel students on subjects in which he is incompetent. The business-academician must counsel on subjects of his specialty to people who are incompetent to judge.

As the academician must justify his existence and presence to the administration through attendance at faculty meetings and participation on general education committees, so the academician in business must justify his existence by showing up every day from eight to five-no matter how productive the day is to be, he must be at his desk—and by "selling" his projects. If you're going to be paid all this money, then you have to think of what it is you should be doing, why you should be doing it, how much money the company will make, and why you should do it rather than someone in engineering, finance, or marketing. For the scholarly academician who is trying to get money out of a Fund, the key words are "integration of the social sciences", "validation of hypotheses relating to inter-disciplinary subjects". For the corporate academician, the key words are: "practical, not theoretical, study"; "mathematical (or psychoanalytical) in nature"; "new techniques recently discovered and recently covered in an article in the Harvard Business. Review".

The paternalistic sense of noblesse oblige which one meets in college administrations is increased a thousandfold from the administrators-professional managers-of business. The Corporation does right-voluntarily. It gives its employees as many benefits as it possibly can, and as much as is good for them. In return the professional in business is expected to be loyal to management, against Kefauver, Keynsians and labor-union bosses (even in business it's not fashionable to be against labor unions, just corrupt bosses). An economist in business was once called on to join a "study team" to discuss how the Corporation should reply to the Kefauver Committee on administered prices if it should be called to testify. Intrigued by the chance to work on a subject close to his specialty, he eagerly attended the meetings, only to discover that the time was taken up in discussing how to "smear" the economist working for Kefauver, who was, in fact, a personal friend. A long-range planning team on what to do in case of a strike (meeting two weeks before the end of negotiations) turned out to be a recruiting team for a goon squad to bust the picket line.

#### **Doing the Right Thing**

The waste of mind within the Corporation is fantastic. The Organization Man who has a smattering of curiosity, at least about some subjects, and who has spent his career within the Organization is content to channel his thoughts within the grooves laid down by the Organization. His native curiosity finds outlet within the assigned areas, embryonic curiosity outside of his field of specialty is stifled by management propaganda. Its instrument is the Management Newsletter and the Management Course, in which engineers, mathematicians, physicists and the rest sit down together every week to discuss the morale of business and how the corporation is really trying, and succeeding as best it can, against the combined forces of Government and Labor Unions, to Do the Right Thing. It is shocking to see the physicist, mathematician, or electronic engineer, who takes nothing for granted within his own field, accept everything that management feeds him in others. It might not be so shocking were there some recognition of reality from management, but as David McCord Wright put it, the trouble with a society organized on the principle of noblesse oblige is that it depends on the existence of a nobility.

Homogenization in a moral vacuum is taking place in both College and Business. The distinction between town and gown is fast disappearing (at least in the smaller colleges; perhaps it remains at Cambridge and New Haven). Professors act and think very much like the masses around them. And why not? Hasn't Professor S. M. Lipset explained in the New York Times that a) anti-intellectualism is a perfectly legitimate expression of sportsmanship, and b) it doesn't really exist outside of the intellectual's imagination? The culture, viewed from any possible angle, is simply being homogenized. Regional, sexual, ethnic, dialectical, and esthetic differences are all being bleached and ironed out. The amorality of the market-place is becoming the morality of the colleges. Democracy is becoming mobocracy. Mass education is equated with democratic education only by those who enjoy a fine sense of irony.

Ask a random sample of students why they are in college, and the response will be overwhelming: They are there, virtually without a touch of the admirable old self-deception, to carve a larger share of prosperity for themselves. A college degree spells greater earning power, and it is best secured in any of the exotic "disciplines" (hotel management, public relations, advertising, ship tanker operation) currently burgeoning around Schools of Business Administration. I speak only of the colleges, not of the professional schools-into which uneducated young men have been flocking for a long time. Whoever still believes there is a great distance from the ivy-colored building to BBD & O should look at some statistics on the curricular distribution of American students-or the lists of commencement speakers. Bill Whyte of Fortune magazine knows better.

The hue and cry over Sputniks coupled with some population projections have precipitated some awareness that there is something wrong in education. There are at present approximately three million college students; that staggering number is, at a most conservative estimate, expected to double by 1970. And if the ultimate cash value of a B. A. is one hundred thousand dollars in increased earning power now, it will probably be a good deal higher in twelve years. This will justify the greatly increased tuition fees that are imminent and the greatly increased donations, with no strings attached, by Big Business to Big Academe. No strings need to be attached in such a situation, for in this Woukaday world, as Herbert Gold has called it, it is the intellectual not the businessman who is out of step. Arrangements are being suggested whereby the student can borrow against his future earnings to finance his college (and presumably graduate) education. A very sensible and practical arrangement for a society which sees education and learning in terms of its market value. It is a mistake to call this anti-intellectualism. It has nothing to do with intellectualism. Knowledge and learning are not things in themselves, they are vendible commodities. As the effective demand for higher education increases there will be corresponding increase for professors. There are signs of higher salaries already. Very shortly an Assistant Professorship will look lucrative, and therewith still another difference between business in one place and business in another will have vanished. Since the corruption is so little short of universal, we are close to the point where all that matters is which form of corruption pays the most—and to hell with psychic income. In the past a professor resigned himself to being poor; he had much leisure for the contemplative life, and there were other gratifications that compensated for his low pecuniary income. There was at least a body of other scholars throughout the country who appreciated and discussed his contributions to knowledge. Nowadays the contributions to knowledge that are acknowledged are the ones that are appreciated by the business world.

We are in the penultimate stages of dehumanization. Civilization, curious phenomenon that it is, is becoming uninhabitable. Fifteen years ago, Karl Mannheim was worried about a society in which a tree was no longer a tree but timber. What shall we say of a society in which men are no longer men but bookkeepers in a whorehouse?

Dear Liberation.

I enclose a recent letter of mine to the New York Times, which declined to publish it. Apparently I, and others of us, take matters by an odd handle, or take up odd matters, not warranting much circulation.

Paul Goodman

Editor of the New York Times, Sir,

Now that the editorializing about Pasternak and Doctor Zhivago has subsided, may I point out two obvious things: (1) that most of the heated indignation in our presses was simply a gesture in the cold war and was not authentically concerned with human freedom at all. And (2) that to people concerned with freedom of expression, this admixture of another motive has been not only disgusting but also threatening, for it means that the rights of mankind are subordinated to ulterior aims here just as they are there.

There is little security in a press that defends freedom only when it is convenient as propaganda. When the religious hierarchy of Ireland effectually banned plays by Joyce and O'Casey in Dublin last spring and led to the indignant actors calling off the entire Spring Festival, why did not the American editor speak out loud, especially since his voice would have had influence in Ireland? How is it different from the Pasternak case? Because we aren't engaged in a cold war with the religious hierarchy of Ireland? Or to give a more trivial case, when the little town of Hicksville banned the showing of four ancient comedies of Chaplin, I looked in vain for editorial satire.

It is dangerous not to look at these matters disinterestedly and philosophically. Because of our beautiful tradition of civil and human rights, we can speak out eloquently about Pasternak, we are to the manor born; just as the Russians with their age-old and continuing tradition of censorship, are clumsy or frightening even when they sometimes mean to be praising liberty. But therefore we must be careful not to use our rhetoric glibly, deceiving ourselves more than the rest of the world. There is very much in our own deafening system of communications that makes it hard for truth to be heard even while we complacently believe that speech is free.

POEMS

Ьу

ALLEN

GINSBERG

#### **EUROPE! EUROPE!**

World world world I sit in my room imagine the future sunlight falls in Paris I am alone there is no one whose love is perfect mouth sweeter than human man has been mad man's love is not perfect I have not wept enough my breast will be heavy till death the cities are spectres of cranks of war the cities are work brick & iron and smoke of the furnace of selfhood makes tearless eyes red in London but no eye meets the sun

Flashed out of sky it hits Lord Beaverbrook's white modern solid paper building leaned in London's street to bear last yellow beams old ladies absently gaze up thru fog to Heaven poor pots snake flowers on windowsills to street Trafalgar's fountains splash on noon warmed pigeons myself beaming in eestatic wilderness on St Paul's dome seeing the light on London or here on a bed in Paris sunglow through the high window on plaster walls

Meek crowd underground saints perish creeps streetwomen meet lacklove under gaslamp and neon no woman in house loves husband in sunny unity nor boy loves boy soft fire in breast politics electricity scares downtown radio screams for money blue light on TV screens laughs at dim lamps in empty rooms tanks crash thru bombshell still no dream of man's joy is made movie think factory pushes junk autos tin dreams of eros mind eats its flesh in

starvation geek and no man's fuck is holy for man's work is most war

Bony China hungers brain wash over power dam and America hides mad meat in refrigerator Britain cooks Jerusalem too long France eats oil and dead salad arms & legs in Africa loudmouth devours Arabia negro and white warring against the golden nuptial Russia manufacture feeds millions but no drunk can dream of Myakovsky's suicide rainbow over machinery and backtalk to the sun

I lie in bed in Europe alone in old red under wear symbolic of desire for union with immortality but man's love's not perfect in February it rains as once for Baudelaire one hundred years ago planes roar in the air cars race thru streets I know where they go to death but that is OK it is that death comes before life that no man has loved perfectly no one gets bliss in time new mankind is not born that I weep for this antiquity and herald the Millenium for I saw the Atlantic sun rayed down from a vast cloud at Dover on the sea cliffs tanker size of ant heaved up on ocean under shining cloud and seagull flying through sun light's endless ladders streaming in Eternity to ants in the myriad fields of England to sun flowers bent up to eat infinity's minute gold dolphins leaping through Mediterranean rainbow white smoke and steam in Andes Asia's rivers glittering blind poets deep in lone Apollonic radiance on hillsides littered with empty tombs

Paris 1958

#### TO AUNT ROSE

Aunt Rose—now—might I see you
with your thin face and buck tooth smile and pain
of rheumatism—and a long black heavy shoe
for your bony left leg
limping down the long hall in Newark on the running carpet
past the black grand piano
in the day room
where the parties were
and I sang Spanish Loyalist songs
in a high squeaky voice

while you limped around the room collected the money— Aunt Honey, Uncle Sam, a stranger with a cloth arm in his pocket

hysterical (the Comrades listening)

and huge young bald head of Abraham Lincoln Brigade

—your long sad face
your tears of sexual frustration
(what smothered sobs and bony hips
under the pillows of Osborne Terrace)
—The time I stood on the toilet seat naked
and you powdered my thighs with Calomine
against the Poison Ivy—my tender
and shamed first black curled hairs
What were you thinking in secret heart then
knowing me a man already—
and I an ignorant girl of family silence on the thin pedestal
of my legs in the bathroom—Museum of Newark.
Aunt Rose
Hitler is dead, Hitler is in Eternity; Hitler is with
Tamburlane and Emily Bronte

Though I see you walking still, a ghost on Osborne Terrace
down the long dark hall to the front door
limping a little with a pinched smile
in what must have been a silken
flower dress
Welcoming my father, the Poet, on his visit to Newark
—seeing you arriving in the living room
dancing on your crippled leg
and clapping hands his book
had been accepted by Liveright

Hitler is dead and Liveright's gone out of business

The Attic of the Past and Everlasting Minute are out of print

Uncle Harry's sold his last silk stocking

Claire's left interpretive dancing school

Buba remains a wrinkled monument in Old

Ladies Home blinking at new babies

last time I saw you was the hospital

pale skull protruding under ashen skin

blue veined unconscious girl

in an oxygen tent

at last

the war in Spain has ended long ago
Aunt Rose

Paris 1958

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ANEURIN BEVAN, in Mr. Fraser's interesting analysis, is given rather more significance than he deserves. His is, after all, a type which recurs throughout the history of the labor movement: a fire-eating rebel in the long apprenticeship of opposition, muzzled by office when his party comes to power, until the prospect of electoral change makes a well-timed resignation strategically useful, and then carefully groomed for stardom against the day when the electorate swings again. Bevan is a professional politician who has to obey the rules of the game. The rules say that if he doesn't make the top job in the next round he has missed his chance because of his age. It's now or never for Nye Bevan, and that's why he has nowadays to make those "statesmanlike" utterances which so disappoint and disillusion those hopeful lefties of the lower ranks who looked to him as the mouthpiece for a radical socialist and anti-militarist labor policy.

But if Bevan as a politician runs true to type, in another sense he is an anachronism. The last of the tribunes, someone called him: the last of those spellbinding oracular orators seething with righteous indignation, who dominated politics in another age. A figure rather like his fellow-countryman Lloyd George, a platform crusader in a decade which is more at home with fireside uncle-figures. I suspect that to the very young he

is just another elderly windbag.

Mr. Fraser remarks on Gaitskell's adherence to the belief that "elections turn on the allegiance of a mythical centre" of "placid and timorous persons who run like the devil if the litmus paper shows the least tincture of red." Well, it may not have been true in the Labor landslide of 1945, but it certainly is so in the political stalemate today, and both parties concentrate their attention on the marginal vote in the marginal constituencies, offering their rival pension plans and their all-toobipartisan foreign policy. Social changes since the war (changes for which the Labor Party likes to assume the credit) are affecting Labor's prospects. The central blighted areas of the big cities, mostly solid Labor seats, are losing population, and the marginal suburbs on the perimeter, new strongholds of the middle-class way of life, are gaining. The proportion of the working population engaged in primary production diminishes: social, territorial and occupational mobility are losing votes for Labor.

Above all the Labor Party has failed to attract the young. The devoted local party workers, as Mr. Anthony Howard has recently noted, are never under thirty, they are always "tired grizzled men and grey-haired careworn women". By the time the present dying Parliament is dissolved, nearly three million of the people who voted

Labor in 1945 will be dead. The Labor Party has steadily squashed and dampened any independent thinking amongst its young; three years ago it disbanded its League of Youth, ceased its subsidy to and almost severed its connection with the National Association of Labor Student Organizations. The young, in turn, find the Labor Party bogus, and they are right.

One of the ablest of the younger generation of socialist economists, Mr. John Vaizey, writes:

Being a radical in modern British politics now means having a certain detachment about the fate of the Labor Party. For fifty years it has seemed important to get the 'movement' in; only now is it realised that the 'move-

ment', when in office, consists of much the same sort of

power seekers as the other lot . . .

But beyond the rather belated discovery that all politicians have rather more in common with each other than they have with the rest of us, there are other reasons why people who think seriously about the real issues which perplex and frighten us should have given up any hope in the Labor Party. When Bevan told the Party's 1957 conference at Brighton that to pass a constituency motion which called for unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain would mean that "you will send the British Foreign Secretary naked into the conference chamber", he made it clear, even to the most gullible, that we need not hope for any more constructive attitude in foreign policy from a Labor administration than from the Conservatives. And when he declared on February 4th last that the "fundamental difference" between the two parties was whether the steel industry should be renationalized when Labor next takes office, he reminded us how out of touch a lifetime in politics can make you with the things that really matter in life.

And this leads me to Dwight Macdonald's footnote to history:

The revolutionary alternative to the status quo today is not collectivised property administered by a "workers' state", whatever that means, but some kind of anarchist decentralisation that will break up mass society into small communities where individuals can live together as variegated human beings instead of as impersonal units in the mass sum. The shallowness of the New Deal and the British Labour Party's post-war regime is shown by their failure to improve any of the important things in people's lives—the actual relationships on the job, the way they spend their leisure, and child-rearing and sex and art. It is mass living that vitiates all these today and the State that holds together the status quo. Marxism glorifies "the masses" and endorses the State. Anarchism leads back to the individual and the community, which is "impractical" but necessary-that is to say, it is revolutionary.

Dwight says this is the most-quoted footnote that he ever wrote. (I'm not surprised, I've quoted it three times

myself). It is certainly a valuable utterance since, in our preoccupation with politics and the mechanics of power, his remark forces us to recognize the truth that politics is irrelevant to the things which really concern us. Nuclear disarmament is not "practical politics" and consequently the participants in last Easter's march from London to the Nuclear Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston, and in the demonstrations at Christmas at the missile base at North Pickering, were for the most part supporters of no party: certainly no party supported them. Experiments in workers' control of industry are not "practical politics"—the Labor Party says so, and consequently the Mineworkers' Union has sternly turned down the suggestion that one of the pits due to be closed as uneconomic by the Coal Board should be run experimentally by the miners themselves.

The more valuable aspects of the socialist rethinking that has taken place since the events at Suez and Hungary in 1956 are all in the fields outside "practical politics". The Universities and Left Review, a new magazine of the young socialist intelligentsia, began on the rebound of Suez-Hungary as a neo-Marxist organ with all the usual stale platitudes that the phrase implies, served up as a fresh dish. But by its latest number it has become a platform of radical sociology, examining the quality of life in contemporary Britain and demanding "viable smaller societies, on a face-to-face scale," and "the extension of the individual's power over the collective forces which shape his life." Similarly the philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch, in her contribution to the symposium Conviction, discussing the way in which the Labor Party has reduced every issue to a political formula, the danger of "starving the moral imagination of the young" and the degeneration of socialist philosophy, looks back to the "Guild Socialist" movement of the early years of this century. The guild socialists, she writes, "were deeply concerned with the destruction of community life, the degradation of work, the division of man from man which the economic relationships of capitalism had produced, and they looked to the transformation of existing communities, the trade unions, the factories themselves, for the restoration of what was lost," It is now time she says, "to go back to the point of divergence..." And the man who was, in his youth, the most able advocate of the guild socialist idea, the economist G. D. H. Cole, who died a couple of months ago, declared in one of his last articles that

to stake the future on larger and larger aggregates of routine operatives does not hold out, to me at least, the prospect of a Socialism under which men would be happy or making the best use of their creative qualities... The most notable writers who have stood out against the acceptance of this trend have been not socialists, but anarchists such as Kropotkin, and original thinkers like Gandhi. These, I know, are unpopular authorities to quote to present-day socialists; but may they not prove to have been prophetic?

This is a different kind of thinking from that of Mr. Bevan and the policy makers of the Labor Party. From their point of view, intent on counting parliamentary majorities, it is merely beside the point. But if it gains ground, and it is the only kind of socialist thought that looks to me like gaining ground, they and their version of socialism will be seen to be as irrelevant as any other political party to our real problems. And the advocates of a decentralized libertarian society, instead of ruefully supporting the Labor Party as a "lesser evil", will have to explore what in their own faute de mieux socialism they have evaded the necessity of exploring: the means of effecting social change without recourse to the conquest of the coercive machinery of the state.

#### THE CRIME OF ASBURY HOWARD

Asbury Howard is a prominent Negro citizen of Bessemer, Alabama. He has lived there for forty-two years, and is a deacon of the Starlight Baptist Church. He makes his living by operating a gas station, and is also employed by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, of which he is eastern vice-president.

Howard was vice-president of the Bessemer branch of the N. A. A. C. P. until it was forced out of existence by the \$100,000 fine imposed on it by the Alabama Supreme Court for refusing to produce its membership list. He is also president of the Bessemer Voters League, an organization that was formed to advance the right of Negroes to register and vote.

In January of this year, Howard engaged a local signpainter to reproduce a cartoon on a canvas a yard and a half square to be hung on the walls of the Voters League's meeting hall. The cartoon, which had appeared in the Kansas City Call, depicted a Negro in chains saying: "Lord help all Americans to see that you intended human beings to have the same rights." Howard had the painter add: "Vote Today for a Better Tomorrow."

Before the canvas was finished, the local police chief tock it from the painter. When Howard acknowledged that he had ordered it made, he was arrested by the chief without warrant

A few days later, Judge James Hammonds found Howard guilty of violating a city ordinance prohibiting the publication of "intemperate matter tending to provoke a breach of the peace, or any matter prejudicial to good morals." The prosecutor had summed up the city's case by stating: "It is my opinion that showing a man in chains is prejudicial to good order." Howard was fined \$105 and sentenced to five months in jail by the State Court. Appeal has been denied, and he is serving sentence, pending an effort to get the case before a Federal court.

When Howard left the courtroom, he was attacked, while still in the city hall, by forty or more white men, and badly beaten. There were fifteen or more policemen in the vicinity of the attack. The only arrest they made was of Howard's son, who sought to protect his father, and who was charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.

What has happened to Howard is a flagrant instance of the suffering to which our Negro fellow-citizens, not only in the South but elsewhere as well, are subjected in their efforts to abolish discrimination, to secure the free exercise of the right to vote, and to enter fully into their heritage. voi

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# NOT SO LONG AGO

A. J. MUSTE

Autobiography: Part 16

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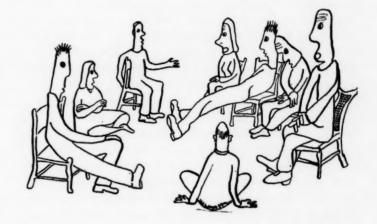
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The A. F. of L. and the Communist Party

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Brookwood and John Dewey



I CLOSED an earlier installment by observing that although LaFollette polled around five million votes in the 1924 Presidential election, nothing in the way of more effective political organization came of it. The American Federation of Labor had broken precedent by endorsing LaFollette and Wheeler; many of its members and even some of its leaders had shown a strong interest in independent political action, perhaps on the model of the British Labor Party. But it turned firmly back to Samuel Gompers' essentially apolitical syndicalist philosophy, which in politics confined itself to a policy of "rewarding your friends and punishing your enemies," who were running for office on the tickets of one of the major parties.

This was only one of many indications that 1924 was a turning point marking the end of the post-World War I period of social upheaval and experimentation. In Europe the key factor was Germany, as is again the case today. With the Dawes and Owen Young plans American capitalist interests and the Republican Party began the process of rehabilitating the German economy and preparing the German state for the role of providing a military balance against France to the west and Russia to the east. This was the year when it finally became clear that no Socialist or Communist revolution was impending in Germany.

In the United States Calvin Coolidge was elected to the Presidency and what was then called the New Capitalism developed. This was a capitalism which had overcome the boom-and-bust cycle. It had also eliminated any need for class struggle, since under it employers and labor had a common interest in ever-expanding production. In the 1928 election its propagandists promised "a chicken in every pot and an automobile in every garage."

Business propagandists went to Europe to induct the

tired and old-fashioned industrialists of that continent into the mysteries of their craft, and European trade unionists were brought over here to be instructed by A. F. of L. leaders in the techniques of labor-management cooperation. Some of us have lived through that period and the ensuing inexplicable (?) depression of 1929 and after, as well as that second World War which had supposedly been rendered impossible by the victorious war to end war which preceded it. The victory over war itself was indeed supposed to have been sealed by the Kellogg-Briand pact of that same year 1928, which outlawed war among civilized states forever. In our minds there remains a hard residue of skepticism about the built-in guarantees against depression of the People's Capitalism of today and the cultural significance of its bigger cars in bigger garages and TV sets in the bedroom as well as the parlor. There remains in our hearts skepticism and foreboding about the balance of nuclear terror, with its built-in guarantees against another world war.

#### **Green Succeeds Gompers**

To return to 1924, this was the year that William Green was elected, at the Atlantic City convention of the A. F. of L., to succeed the deceased Samuel Gompers. Green was a miner from Ohio who had once been something of a militant and idealist, as anyone who tried to organize miners in the first quarter of this century had to be. He had become secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers as John L. Lewis' stooge. By 1924 Green was to the labor movement what Calvin Coolidge was to the American political scene—an incarnation of perfect mediocrity, who was therefore an ideal instrument for stronger men who knew what they wanted and dared to go after it. There was, of course, one glaring contrast

between the two: Green was as voluble as Coolidge was taciturn. Coolidge's one very precious contribution to the American language was his reply to Mrs. Coolidge, who asked him, one morning when he came home from church, what the minister had preached about. Coolidge answered: "About Sin". Hoping to get a little more information, Mrs. Coolidge asked, "What did he say about it?" Calvin answered: "He was against it." Now Green, if asked a similar question in public, would have talked about it in rolling periods, packing in the maximum number of clichés, for forty minutes. In that time he would have conveyed exactly the same amount of information that Coolidge conveyed in five words.

The A. F. of L., as "prosperity" returned, entered upon a period of stodgy class-collaboration. Union membership paradoxically declined in spite of "good times". What militancy there had been disappeared, except in the garment trades, textiles and soft coal, which did not benefit from the miracle of the New Capitalism. But these were sick industries. Efforts at organization, unsupported by the more stable unions, almost invariably failed. There were bitter internal battles between Communists and other elements. The non-Communist progressives had a tough time of it. The prevailing trend in the A. F. of L. hierarchy was marked by complacency, stolid conservatism and obscurantism.

One of the most flagrant instances of the attitude of the executive committee of the A. F. of L. was its condemnation of Brookwood Labor College in 1928. Brookwood had weathered its first two or three experimental years, and by 1924 was firmly established and recognized as the leading workers' educational project in the country. Students in the regular courses represented an increasing number of unions and more of them came on scholarships from their local or national unions. During the summer we put on one- and two-week institutes which were entirely financed by union bodies, and in a number of cases attended by top officials. These were in no sense radical unions. Included among them were the United Textile Workers of America, the Women's Auxiliary of the International Association of Machinists, the Women's Trade Union League, and some of the unions in the Railroad Department of the A. F. of L. Our connection with the trade unions was real and increasingly close.

Encouraged by this support, as well as by our reputation in progressive academic circles, in 1927-8 we actually announced a campaign for a two-million-dollar building and endowment fund. As I look back now and reflect on what two million dollars meant in those years, the idea strikes me as having been on the fantastic side. Had we raised anything like such an amount, the enlarged resident school, and the greatly enlarged extension work which this would have made possible, would have made Brookwood the dominant factor in the work-

ers' education movement, where it was already a substantial force. In view of prevailing conditions, the program might have proved unrealistic even if the country had not in a year or two gone into the tailspin of the depression. As it was, the campaign did not get off the ground at all, in considerable part because the executive council of the A. F. of L. (or some key figures in it) decided that Brookwood was dangerous and ought to be cut down to size.

#### The A. F. of L. Outlaws Brookwood

The announcement of the condemnation voted by the executive council came without any warning like a thunderclap out of a cloudless sky. On August 18, 1928, the New York Times and other papers stated that on the basis of a partial report by Vice President Matthew Woll the council had urged all affiliated unions to withdraw support from Brookwood, keep students away from it, etc. Woll's report was not published and has not been made public to this day. Only recently have I been informed that even now, after thirty years have elapsed, academic researchers who want to write on the period are not permitted to see the document. From statements made by Woll and others it appeared that the charges were that "doctrines antagonistic to A. F. of L. policy were taught at Brookwood"; also that "anti-religious doctrines" were being promulgated, and that "pro-Soviet demonstrations" had occurred there. One specific allegation was that at a May Day observance at the school the picture of Samuel Gompers had been displayed along with those of Eugene V. Debs, Marx and Lenin. This was true. The composition of the student body being what it was, some of them were as irked by having Gompers' picture on the wall as others were by Lenin's, but it was in accord with the catholicity we observed in these matters that both were there and that the whole student body took part in the meeting. We were given to understand that in the eyes of the A. F. of L. magnates the fact that Gompers' picture, like the others', had a border of red ribbon around it constituted an additional affront.

It happened that on the summer night when the news about the A. F. of L.'s attack on Brookwood broke, I was in Paterson, New Jersey, along with the officers—Roman Catholics, conservatives in their social philosophy, and completely loyal to the A. F. of L.—of the United Textile Workers of America. Paterson was then still a silk-weaving center of some importance. It had a history of bitter and continuous labor-management conflict. Union organization had been bedeviled for years by a conflict between locals of the U. T. W. of A. and an independent union of silk workers known as the Associated Silk Workers. The U. T. W. of A. was eager to bring the Associated into its fold and had called me into the situation as a moderator of meetings of the two

unions to lay the basis for merger. At the time the leaders of the Associated were mainly young militants with whom Evan W. Thomas and I had worked closely in 1920-21. They had by 1928 joined the Communist Party, but at that moment the C. P. favored unity of workers in the established—mostly A. F. of L.—unions, so I had the confidence of the Associated leadership also. What these youths did at a later point in the negotiations, when the C. P. line abruptly changed, I may recount in a later chapter. At the moment it was the A. F. of L. officialdom which launched the bomb—to the vast surprise of the leaders of their own union in the textile industry.

#### A Blow at Progressive Labor

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The attack on Brookwood was a matter of fact essentially an attack on the progressive trade-union leaders of the time, whose role I have described in earlier installments. The college had at that time ten labor directors. These ten had ultimate control of its policies, because they had a clear majority of the votes on a board on which faculty, alumni and students were also represented. The chairman was the well known James H. Maurer, president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor. His abilities were so great and his loyalty to the trade union movement so indubitable that despite efforts of reactionaries to oppose him, he was repeatedly re-elected by overwhelming majorities. Other board members included Fannia M. Cohn, head of the educational department of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union; Rose Schneiderman, president of the Women's Trade Union League; John Fitzpatrick, head of the Chicago Federation of Labor; John Brophy, president of District 2 of the United Mine Workers; the editor of the official journal of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks; the editor and vice-president of the International Association of Machinists; an official of the American Federation of Teachers, and one from the United Textile Workers.

The Brookwood board naturally protested against being publicly attacked without a word of warning (a gross violation of trade-union ethics), and asked for a copy of the Woll report and a hearing before the executive council. President Green's response to this request, and to a flood of protests which poured into the A. F. of L. office from all quarters, was: "I will refrain from taking any decisive action in this case until after the members of the executive council have had ample opportunity to acquaint themselves with the protests filed and the requests made for a hearing by the board of directors of Brookwood College". It was a typically weasel-worded statement, which sounded moderate and democratic, but did not commit Green to anything except acquainting the members of the executive council with the simple request from a group of important unionists to see the evidence against them and to be given a hearing before being further pilloried as traitors or irresponsible dupes.

The Brookwood board was never given a look at the Woll report. It was never given a hearing. Instead Green wrote to a couple of them that he would be willing to talk privately with one member at a time, a suggestion which was indignantly repudiated. In the fall, Green sent out a communication to all affiliated unions, making the warning to withdraw support from Brookwood final.

It should be mentioned that the action against Brookwood directly affected the American Federation of Teachers, a supposedly autonomous international union, which, according to firmly established procedure, the executive council should have consulted before taking even preliminary action. This was essential both because the charges had to do with educational theory and practice and because the educational status and livelihood of the members of Brookwood Local 189 A. F. of T. were threatened. The A. F. of T. protested vehemently, and persistently, only to be completely ignored.

Since this was a Presidential election year, the 48th annual convention of the A. F. of L. was held late in November at New Orleans. By all usual standards, the American Federation of Teachers and the Brookwood Board of Directors should have been granted an appeal to the convention. But this would have required revealing the evidence on which the attack on us was based and hearing the dozens of labor unionists who had been students at Brookwood and who would have refuted charges of "Communism", "disloyalty to the labor movement", and teaching of "anti-religious doctrines". So rather than arrange for an appeal, the higher-ups sent word during the early days of the New Orleans convention that the Brookwood case was settled. Brookwood was no longer a trade-union concern and it would not come up at the convention at all! However, there was an immense amount of interest in the case, and if it had not come up, many would have gone away with the impression that the executive council had no real evidence, that it was trying to weasel out, and that the unions could safely disregard its action and continue to patronize Brookwood. The situation required the kind of witch-hunt that had marked A. F. of L. conventions for several years.

#### John Dewey Pilloried

The witch-hunt was precipitated by P. J. Shea, a vice-president of the Street Car Men's Union. An agreement made by that union with the Mitten interests in Philadelphia was widely regarded as having played outrageously into the hands of the street car company. It had been severely and effectively criticized by Brookwood graduates at a Pennsylvania Federation of Labor convention. When the education committee's report came

before the convention, Shea indignantly asked why Brookwood had not been mentioned either in this or in the executive council's report. This gave Matthew Woll an opening for an extended speech. His "investigation" had demonstrated that Brookwood was "a breeding ground for Communism". He devoted ample space to branding John Dewey, who led the ranks of educators who were outraged by the content and manner of the attack on Brookwood, as himself a "Communist propagandist". He quoted me as having said that "capitalism is not a just social system" and calling for "control of the world by producers". Not a single hint was given of the hundreds of communications which questioned or condemned the Woll report, or the fact that none of the accused had been permitted to see it.

Even in this lynch atmosphere it was impossible to shut off debate entirely. President Thomas F. McMahon of the United Textile Workers, which had expelled Communists from its ranks only a couple of months earlier, said that his union had implicit confidence in Brookwood. Toby Hall, a veteran of labor struggles in Pennsylvania; Charles L. Reed, a Brookwood graduate and delegate of the Salem, Massachusetts, Central Labor Union, who charged the executive council with cowardice for not giving Brookwood a hearing; and several others, got the floor. This was becoming a serious debate, and the steam roller swung into action. President Green made a speech in which he complained that some union men always seemed to think that the executive council consisted of a "bunch of fossils who are always wrong and the enemy always right," which in those days came very near being the case.

When the secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers, Florence Hanson, moved that I, one of the A. F. of T.'s vice-presidents, be given the floor, she was told that she was out of order at the moment but that she could make the motion later. Later, when she stood up repeatedly directly in front of President Green she was simply not recognized, and there the matter ended, as far as the New Orleans convention was concerned.

Enough leaked out for it to be known that the alleged-ly damaging material in Woll's report came from one (possibly two) students at Brookwood during 1927-28 on scholarship from the Railway Carmen's Union. There is considerable reason to think that at least one man was sent for the express purpose of gathering material that would furnish a basis for an attack to curb Brookwood's growing influence, and with it that of other progressive elements in the labor movement. However, it is conceivable that a man coming out of a very conservative and fundamentalist environment would be genuinely shocked by an institution where labor practices, political and economic theories and practices, philosophies were all possible subjects for study and criticism;

where the frankest discussion of all kinds of questions went on all the time; where there were Communists and Socialists as well as "pure and simple trade unionists" in the student body; where we did sing the Internation ale and the Red Flag from time to time; and where the general atmosphere was certainly critical of the kind of methods and theories of a large section of the A. F. of L. officialdom that led to the attack on Brookwood and the infamous way in which it was carried out. In the case of other students, who experienced this shockmuch as innumerable students have experienced similar shocks in academic institutions—they came to us and we fought out the intellectual battle while assuaging the emotional stress. In this case the man said nothing to his fellow students or to his teachers, but sent "inside" reports to Matthew Woll.

The progressive elements in the unions, and educators generally, continued to support Brookwood. We had two or three excellent years following the A. F. of L. blast.

#### And the Communists?

As for the Communists, the Daily Worker stated on August 8, 1928, when the news broke, that "there are no Communists on the staff of the school. Its teachings are known primarily as class-collaborationist". The Daily Worker also opined, correctly, that the A. F. of L. officialdom (called "misleaders" of course) preferred to control workers' education through the Workers' Education Bureau, which in the face of opposition from progressive quarters had adopted the policy of permitting the executive council of the A. F. of L. to control its policies.

On the next day, the Young Workers (Communist) League joined the A. F. of L. in warning worker students away from Brookwood, stating: "Brookwood is no more Communist in spirit than the Executive Board of the A. F. of L. itself. We have always found that this institution has consistently functioned as a cloak for...the reactionary labor fakirs...the Y. W. L. will continue its struggle against Brookwood and its ideology and will make every effort to destroy whatever influence it may have among the working youth."

To be continued in next issue.

#### **Business Is Business**

Testifying before the McClellan Committee recently, Milton Hammergren told how jukebox sales skyrocketed when his respectable Wurlitzer Company began to do business in the 1940's with "Greasy Thumb" Guzik, "Longie" Zwillman, and other members of the crime syndicate.

As a side effect of this charming relationship there were many acts of violence and perhaps one or two murders, said Mr. Hammergren, but this was after all "one of the liabilities of the business".

"We didn't like it," he noted piously, "but we still had to sell jukeboxes." estions sts and onists" nation ere the cind of

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#### April 1959 ration

REVIEWS . .

#### **Private Troubles and Public Issues**

In The Causes of World War III,1 C. Wright Mills offers the following argument (I paraphrase): 1. War is lunacy, is the enemy. 2. Its coming is not, as the morally insensible take it, altogether a matter of fate, for progress of industrial society has centralized power in such a way that certain human beings, the power elite, make important choices, tending to war or peace. 3. The choices these groups make are hastening the tendency to war, because they act as one would expect irresponsible soldiers and business-men to act in a political vacuum (the U.S.). 4. The problem is how to cause them or their successors to make the right choices, such as reduction of armaments, missile-base withdrawals, earnest negotiations, generous economic assistance to the "underdeveloped countries," etc.; choices which would reduce the likelihood of war, favor democratic tendencies in the underdeveloped countries, and affect the attitudes of the Russian power elite.2 5. The means for achieving rational decision-making in the power groups is (proposed as) a resolute stand on the part of the intellectual community-Intellectuals, Scientists, Ministers-who are to demand responsibility of the powerful, to act responsibly, to inquire and discuss with utter frankness, to refuse to do what is idiotic, to stir the public, and eventually, by taking a Utopian stand against the crackpot realism, to bring about certain key institutional changes, namely a "publicly responsible economy," the liberation of science from military control, the ramification of democratic organizations of the public.

A great deal here (esp. under 1. and 5.) is very very good, presented ably, forcefully and with uncommon conviction. Mills knows that the "power clite" is not going to adopt his proposals. He formulates "immediate demands," I take it, chiefly to dramatize how a sane nation would act in the insane international situation.

But why on earth, one would like to know, does he address his appeal to the occupational Intellectuals, and not to-people? After all, if a utopian vision, no matter whose, is to be realized-and Mills is right that the short-run "practical" will just not do-then "the mass" is going to have to dis-aggregate ultimately into individuals, and re-form into human communities. Thinking this, one had better have something to say to-people. I assume that Mills is not merely reacting to the old, foolish populist rhetoric, so perhaps he means to write a second handbook, for all of us; if he does, however, he will be obliged, in order to come to grips with his problems, to skew his perspective considerably, and leave for a time the high level of political-sociological abstractions. Whenever one writes in terms of great matters like war, peace, publics, Democratic States, and so on, it is all but impossible to keep (what should be) the fundamental concerns from becoming, somehow,

New York: Simon & Schuster. 172 pp. Cloth, \$3.50; paper, \$1.50.

2. Mills sees the world still power-polarized to the U. S. and Russia (neglecting China). It does not affect the questions I will discuss, but I do not think this is up-to-date.

very distorted. Thus, I assume that Mills, like John Dewey at his best, takes as primary, as the fundamental concerns, the values to be realized in human life: the love-work-play-art-learning occasions in the day-to-day living of individuals. I assume this, but I do not read it off the book. These concerns emerge here, negatively only, as-the private troubles of individuals, to be translated into public issues.<sup>3</sup> (I do not understand what Mills sees in this phrase, "private troubles.") Suppose, now, instead, a rigorous social scientist, for example Mills, were to take as his point of departure and constant point of reference, not the world competition or the Democratic State, but primary human values conceived (say) in Dewey's best concrete manner. What sort of program might he fashion? I wonder if, in our day, such an analysis could end in affirmation of the State. I wonder whether the scientist would not be impelled to look for alternatives to the centralization of power, rather than for ways to utilize that centralized power. I wonder whether it might not be a surprising and exciting program—utopian of course, but this is already agreed

In the light of such an analysis, would not the ugly dichotomy of Intellectuals and mass, on which Mills program rests, be seen as itself one of the root social

Meanwhile, anyone who desires can, without difficulty. transpose to his own situation Mills' many excellent suggestions for action, of which my summary (under 5. above) gives only a sketchy idea. DAVID WIECK

#### The Only Practicality

Escapist intellectuals peering out at the world of events have seen traditionally "a darkling plain / Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight," and have willed to stay within their sheltered certitude. But what Matthew Arnold saw from his private window as shingles of beach still luminous with ebbing sea has for his successors become a Wasteland devoid of faith and barren of moral structure. They have no way of understanding that ignorant armies are about to clash.

A century ago the escapist's moral window was well defined for him by two other kinds of intellectuals: the conventional activist, who at his best was a responsible politician and civil servant, and the intellectual radical Carlyle, Mill, Huxley, and in America Thoreau and Emerson, who even more than the Englishmen integrated humanism with action to define life in a democracy. But while twentieth-century England, declining as a world power, has kept its intellectual civil servant and -in Shaw, Orwell, and Russell-its radical sage, the present American image is predominantly that of an escapist who abdicates his task of hardheaded denunciation of "life without principle."

A notable exception is the sociologist C. Wright Mills, who in The Power Elite (1956) and now in The Causes of World War III calls fellow intellectuals out of their

<sup>3.</sup> Perhaps what irritated Richard Watts (in the New York Post, Jan. 20): "He is assuredly worth listening to, but I fear that his air of intellectual superiority makes the listening difficult." But Watts' point is not mine.

shells to join him in synthesizing social studies with moral principles in order to save the world. Mills does not appeal on bended knee. He is angry with intellectuals for their "default" to shortsighted and irresponsible leaders: the elites of the military, big business, and politics. Insisting that true pragmatism combines both technology and utopian idealism, he is enraged with those who allow any division.

No Christian dualist—with the life of ideals on one one hand and practical compromise in "this world" on the other, and with Crucifixion the only integration of the two-Mills holds that idealism undilute is the only practicality. He stands flush in the American tradition of Emerson and James, for whom valid ideals and effective actions were necessarily part and parcel of each other. It is a tradition long obscured by Arnold's cleanhanded successors—the introverts and activists, and now the existentialists-who would beat brows at the notion that political responsibility should infringe upon bravely wrought privacies. The very radicals of the 'thirties who might be most expected to herald this infringement spend their articles crowing that whereas they achieved social relevance today's young writers can't. Leslie Fiedler, for example, concludes an acid analysis of to-day's "Un-angry Young Men" (Encounter, January 1958) with the following discovery: "At the moment, one has the sense of young writers at a loss for a subject: poets all technique and no theme; novelists desperately contriving factitious subjects because they need some-how to keep writing books. But the subject is there: the comedy of themselves in their passionate and absurd relationship to us" (i. e., to the socially relevant writers of the preceding generation). Indeed, the subject is available-but it is not in Fiedler's passionate and absurd hothouse. Moral leadership for man in society. always the purpose of the best American writers, is the only means for their and for society's survival.

Mills says it is high time intellectuals paid for their enjoyable alienation with some new social thinking. First, they should analyze official definitions of reality, which picture the world as two armed camps, one "ours' and the other "theirs", with "our" safety possible only in terms of more effective bombs and missiles. So doing. they would make their own-pragmatic-postulate: "The only realistic military view is the view that war, and not Russia, is now the enemy." The "military metaphysic", rooted in the belief that arms possession and the arms race is the solution for international conflict, would be abandoned. Moreover, they would find that, because mere "practicality"—the strategy and technology of "brisk generals and gentle scientists"—has so long held sway, the solution must be idealistic. Americans must begin by renouncing the means by which the world and, even worse, they themselves know the Hiroshima atrocities to be like those of Dachau. Disarmament must be unilateral, primarily so Americans can begin again morally, and also because the only true practicality has such a basis. Not only should they cease to test nuclear weapons of mass extermination, but they should also "abandon all military bases and installations outside the continental domain of the United States"—thereby ceasing to provoke Russians to military aggression. Displacing warfare as solution for world conflict is that integration of morality and technology which would aid all mankind in its struggle for

a suitable standard of living. Next year, twenty per cent of the current military budget should be allocated for this purpose; and each year that amount should be increased by an additional ten per cent of the total. "Utopian action is survival action."

The clear-headed and relentless honesty of Mills' summons is best revealed in its own moral basis: a "pagan sermon" in which Mills shows "Christian" intellectuals that he, a pagan, accepts the Christian idealism which they ignore. At the center lies his question: "Who among you is considering what it means for Christians to kill men and women and children in ever more efficient and impersonal ways?" In a day when religion is little more than "the chaplain, who in military costume eases the conscience and stiffens the morale of men at war," Mills asserts that pacifism is the only measure of a Christian, indeed of any man. From his argument only one conclusion is possible: every thinking, moral man should say a resounding No to the State's demand that he serve in its armed forces, should come out as a conscientious objector to the genocide that is modern war.

Emerging, he would come to grips with outward reality, and it with him. He would find, for example, that in order to qualify legally as a "conscientious objector" he must check "yes" to Selective Service's question, "Do you believe in a Supreme Being?"; that prison is the only recourse for the conscientious agnostic who will not be conscripted; and that to counsel non-cooperation with the Draft is just as much a penal offense as to practice it. Considering the fact that eighty cents of the tax dollar is for making war, he might refuse to pay his taxes—another likely road to jail. Certainly, he would discover that the question between intellectuals again must be Emerson's to the imprisoned Thoreau—"Henry, why are you there?"—with "Why are you not here?" again the rejoinder.

ALLAN R. Brick

#### CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

"All the important..." the Thinker was saying.

But his words were drowned out by the bellowing, braying rock-and-roll record his daughter was playing.

"All basic problems..." he started once more. But he lost me: I'd seen, through a half-opened door. His suicide wife lying sprawled on the floor.

"... problems are solved," he triumphantly said, as he poked at the fireplace. The embers flared red; drifting ash-flakes, like fallout, came down on his head.

Guy Daniels

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# LETTERS . . .

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Well-behavedness among pacifists can be a sign of weakness rather than of real understanding of resistance, Gandhian or otherwise. Granted that it is often more rational to be well-behaved, one should not expect mild manners to attract very many ordinary folk, factory workers, trade unionists for example, who are less repressed, who may show anger, even frequent obscenity in their talk and protest. The Boy Scout type of thinking is not going to change the world.

The populace, we find, are generally agreed that the whole business of atom-bomb testing is bad, but (I have seen no polls on the subject) a sizable body believes that we need the tests as long as Russia is making them, and you can't trust Russia. To pierce through this wall of skepticism we need a pacifist movement which is flexible, which is dramatic, humorous, vigorous, angry, and which would not exclude the "hot-rod" and "beat" youth who may get in touch with it. But youths who are unemployed, looking for something to do, tempted sometimes by the Army and Navy recruiting effices, inclined to be cynical of them, are not going to be stimulated by being brought to poetry-and-tea meetings.

Ostensibly, last year's Youth March to Washington for integration was a continuation of the nonviolent resistance movement which had been so successful in Montgomery, Alabama. There were ten thousand students jammed at Lincoln Memorial. They said a nice prayer on the lawn and heard a few speeches (of which only Harry Belafonte's showed any indignation), and then went home. Surely the President must have thought, "What a nice bunch of kids. It will only take a few words to pacify them. They'll understand that there's not much we can do in Little Rock..."

The administration did not choose to meet the students. Yet the local government extended the utmost courtesy to them. The police escorted every bus to its proper destination. Perhaps the officials were astounded when they saw the size of the body. When a crowd of 10,000 comes to the White House, it is quite impossible to ignore them, to send them home, or to hide them. There is one thing that the Administration can get the local authorities to do: They can render the protest less effective. And so, instead of the students being permitted to meet at the White House, they were escorted to the Lincoln Memorial steps. There, in order to insure that no inflammatory speeches would be made, all of the hundreds of indignant posters were removed. Next, admittance to the White House was refused the students. They prayed, they spoke, they promised to return, and then they went home.

In the putting aside of angry slogans, there is a call to put away anger. It is assumed that the grounds are sacred and not admissive to anger—but the grounds are only sacred as long as justice is upheld. When the President turns his back on the people he has corrupted the grounds. Yet the harm was not in the fact that the students laid down their signs—it was in the fact that the leaders asked them to lay down their fighting spirit.

This timid leadership breeds a sense of futility. Will there be the same enthusiasm for the next march, or will

the retreating leadership leave in its wake cynicism and apathy?

No, April 14 should be a great day of celebration. For that can be the day the mounting indignation of the rank and file sweeps aside the timid leadership. Let them stand on the steps all day, all week, until the President sees them and gives his assurance that he will intervene firmly in Little Rock. And in Virginia. Let them demand that all race-hating bomb-throwers be fully punished. And until Negro youths are admitted (even on this painfully gradual basis of nine students per sixteen hundred), let all Negro students withdraw from segregated schools, where their education is below standard.

Robert Batzs

Los Angeles

Dear Editors:

Keep up the good work with LIBERATION. It is a welcome light in the stormy darkness.

I'm doing my small bit here at U. C. L. A. I just completed production of an animated 16 mm. motion picture on Gandhi and nonviolence, entitled *Heat of Anger*. Other things, like anti-R. O. T. C. drives, Civil Defense sitdown strikes and A. C. L. U. student meetings keep the big issues alive.

\*\*Abe Gurvin\*\*

(Ed. note: Readers in the Los Angeles area who want to use the film should get in touch with Mr. Gurvin at 2127 Ridgely, Los Angeles 16, Calif.)

Berkeley, Calif.

Dear Editors:

We lived in the Middle East for a short time—and the article on this subject in the January issue ("The Clue to Middle East Crises" by Paul Mattick) is one of the few sensible ones we have read.

(Mrs.) Jean Jenny

New York

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a subscription to Liberation on the basis of the article by Staughton Lynd in the February 1959 issue—"Travellers of the Lower Depths." I consider this one of the finest and most thoughtful articles on the question of housing and minorities, and a beam of light in the murk and fog of hundreds of articles which have appeared recently, spouting hate, confusion and despair. In addition to my subscription, I enclose an extra dollar, for as many copies or tear sheets as you can spare.

Frances Goldin

Lake Forest, Ill.

Dear Editors:

Many people are uneasy about paying income taxes to the federal government when about three-quarters of this revenue is used for military preparations, military assistance to other countries and the cost of past wars.

I wish to propose that the U. S. government establish a Civilian Tax Fund, to be used for civilian purposes only.

Such a Civilian Tax Fund in the tax field would be roughly parallel to Civilian Public Service camps for C. O.'s in the conscription field, and would make possible a halfway meeting ground between the U. S. government and at least some pacifists.

If the U. S. government does not take such action and continues to spend about three-fourths of its revenue on the military, it seems to me that more and more pacifists will be driven by their uneasy consciences to a tax refusal position similar to Rev. Maurice McCrackin's in Cincinnati (See Liberation, October 1958) rather than help pay for intercontinental ballistics missiles with H-bomb warheads.

Lindley J. Burton

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